

(b) The objective of the Regional Environmental Communication Centre is to build greater awareness among the governments and the people of the region the need for better protection of environment and implementation of environmentally sound and sustainable policies, through their daily environmental news service, to be circulated over the Asia-Pacific news net work

(c) Yes, Sir The proposal has been cleared by the Ministry of Environment & Forests

(d) Communication giving clearance was sent to the General Manager, PTI on 13th January, 1992

(e) Question does not arise

National Testing services

5434 SHRI VIJAY NAVAL PATIL Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) whether the Government propose to set up national testing services to hold tests for enrolment of students in colleges and universities,

(b) if so, the details thereof and the main features thereof,

(c) whether such agency would determine the eligibility of candidates for jobs delinking it from degree or diploma, and

(d) the details of allocation of duties to be entrusted with financial implications?

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) (a) to (d) The National Policy on Education — 1986 envisages that a beginning will be made in delinking degrees from jobs in those selected areas where a university degree need not be a necessary quali-

cation. It also envisages establishment of a National Testing Service, in appropriate phases, to conduct tests on a voluntary basis to determine the suitability of candidates for specified jobs

In pursuance of this, Government has recently registered the National Evaluation Organisation (NEO) as an autonomous body with the following main objects —

- To conduct tests for certifying the suitability of candidates irrespective of their formal qualifications for specified jobs
- To develop methodologies and techniques for testing knowledge, proficiency abilities, skills, competence and aptitude necessary for the performance of specified jobs
- To assist existing institutions and agencies which are conducting different tests by holding preliminary screening or similar other tests on their behalf, for the purpose of admissions to courses of higher studies, faculty recruitment, recruitment of scientists, specialists, etc

To function as a well-equipped resources centre at the national level in test development

A provision of Rs 25 lakhs has been proposed for the Organisation in the 1992-93 Budget

Maintenance of Qutab Minar

5435 SHRI JANGBIR SINGH
SHRI GURUDAS KAMAT

Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state

(a) whether the Qutab Minar is in danger

and closed for public on account of development of cracks in it;

(b) if so, the steps taken/proposed to be taken for its proper upkeep and maintenance,

(c) the details of expenditure incurred in this regard during each of the last three years, and

(d) the time by which its repair work is likely to be completed and opened for public

THE MINISTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI ARJUN SINGH) (a) The Qutab Minar is in a sound state of preservation. The entry into the minar is closed on account of security considerations

(b) Besides day to day maintenance, conservation works are carried out as per actual needs

(c) The expenditure incurred on the maintenance and conservation of this monument during the last three years is as under

<i>Year</i>	<i>Expenditure</i>
1988-89	Rs 9,19,012 00
1989-90	Rs 13,61,263,00
1990-91	Rs 7,74,137 00

(d) Conservation of Qutab Minar is a continuous process. There is no proposal to re-open the Qutab Minar to the public for the present

Operation of Narrow Gauge System

5436 SHRI SANAT KUMAR MANDAL Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state

(a) whether his attention has been invited to the news-item captioned "Indian Railways' ways of serving people better" appearing in the 'Economic Times' New Delhi dated March 7, 1992,

(b) if so, the facts in this regard,

(c) whether the operation of narrow-gauge system is at present a financial deadweight,

(d) the total track mileage of narrow-gauge system in the country and its per annum revenue earning potential, and

(e) how is it proposed to utilise this system profitably in view of the present day financial crunch?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI MALIKARJUN) (a) Yes, Sir

(b) and (c) It is true that the Narrow gauge lines are generally running in loss

(d) Narrow Gauge system on Indian Railways constituted 4068 Route Kilometres as on 31 3 91, and its earnings during 1990-91 was about Rs. 21 crores

(e) By minimising the working expenses and progressive closure of financially non-viable narrow gauge lines wherever feasible

Training to Physicians for AIDS Control

5437 SHRI R SURENDER REDDY Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state

(a) whether the Indian Medical Association (IMA) have prepared a pilot project for imparting special training to the general physicians in regard to AIDS control;